

6582



Advocates for people with Intellectual disabilities  
and related developmental disabilities

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March 2, 2009

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**Testimony before the Committees on Human Services, Public Health, and  
Insurance and Real Estate**

**Re: H.B. #6582, "(Raised) An Act Establishing The Connecticut Healthcare  
Partnership"**

Secretary  
*Imelda Reno*  
Arc of Farmington Valley  
Canton

by

**Lynn Warner, Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut**

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*Anthony Recck*  
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Good morning Members of these distinguished Committees. I am Lynn Warner the Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 57-year-old statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have 23 local chapters that provide supports, services, and advocacy for individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout Connecticut.

Immediate Past President  
*Dawn Lazaroff*  
Tri-County Arc  
Columbia

I am here today to testify in support of **House Bill # 6582, "(Raised) An Act Establishing The Connecticut Healthcare Partnership** The Arc of Connecticut fully supports the idea of allowing nonstate public employers, municipal related employers, small employees and nonprofit employers to join the State of Connecticut health care insurance pool.

Contributions are  
tax-deductible

For years the private providers serving individuals with intellectual disabilities have served these individuals with dignity while providing a high quality of care. However, for years private providers have been consistently under funded, subjected to unfunded mandates, consistent lack of cost of living increases and extensive rate changes. In addition to these funding hurdles – Private Providers are often forced to charge their employees healthcare contribution rates that many of their employees simply can not afford. This system often results in workers, and at times their children and families, who are often uninsured or under insured – some are even on the HUSKY program.

**The Arc/Connecticut, Inc. Member Chapters:** Futures, Inc., Middletown / Greater Enfield Arc / Family Options, Watertown / Arc of Farmington Valley / Friends of New Milford, Inc. / Litchfield County Arc / LOV-Arc, Westbrook / MARC, Inc., Manchester / MARC: Community Resources, Portland / Arc of Meriden-Wallingford / Arc of Greater New Haven / Arc/New London County / Options, Unlimited / Arc of Plainville / Arc of Quinebaug Valley / SARAH Inc., Gulford / SARAH Seneca Residential Services / SARAH Tuxis Residential Services / STAR, Norwalk / Arc of Southington / Tri County Arc, Columbia / Waterbury Arc / WeCAHR, Danbury

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***Private non-profit providers want to be able to offer the best possible benefits to their employees – benefits these individuals truly deserve.***

Employees who are paid a competitive wages and/or receive quality benefits are more likely to give more of themselves to the people they are responsible for caring for if they are not as worried about what will happen if they or their child gets sick or if they have to choose between food or medication.

If staffing turnover rates decline and long-term consistent relationships between the staff members and the individuals in trusted in their care are formed then everybody wins. No one gains anything when employees can not afford to work at an agency or worse yet, forced to work two or three jobs at a time.

On behalf of the 23 non-profit Local Chapters of The Arc of Connecticut, I urge to support the passage of this bill.

Thanks you for the opportunity to speak to you today.